

**Recorder's Office Imaging of Prior Five Years' Index for
Customers**

FY2003 Request: \$200,000
Reference No: 35765

AP/AL: Appropriation
Category: General Government
Location: Statewide
Election District: Statewide
Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2002 - 06/30/2003

Project Type: Renewal and Replacement

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Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

One of the primary statutory functions of the Recorder's/UCC component is to provide its customers with easy access to the permanent public records. This project supports this function in two ways: (1) it enables the component to digitize document images from existing film records for the past 5 years; and (2) it enhances the mainframe based indexing system by providing a direct link to the document images, thereby replacing the cumbersome and time-consuming microfiche process currently used for customer research and retrieval. It is critical to complete the 5-year conversion under this project to supplement the component's technological upgrades to improve public access to the most frequently researched records.

Funding:

	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	Total
Rcpt Svcs	\$200,000						\$200,000
Total:	\$200,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$200,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phased Project	<input type="checkbox"/> On-Going Project
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Total Operating Impact:	0	0
One-Time Startup Costs:	0	
Additional Estimated Annual O&M:	0	0

Prior Funding History / Additional Information:

This is a new project request.

Description of Work to be done:

In early FY01, the component began imaging incoming recorded documents in its Fairbanks office and in July of FY02 began imaging all recorded documents statewide (up to 250,000 documents per year or approximately 600,000 images annually). Currently images are being produced from the original paper documents on a go-forward basis only. To supplement these newly created images for research purposes, customers are requesting a broader image base covering at least the past five years, representing the most heavily researched documents statewide. Since original documents are returned to customers, the only media the component has for this time frame is microfiche or archival rollfilm. This project would convert the past five years' film records to digital images (approximately 2.7 million images) at a cost of approximately \$188.0. The remainder of the request would go toward converting the state's plat aperture cards to digital format to supplement the document images.

Specific Spending Detail:

Outsourcing costs for this digital conversion project are estimated at \$.07 per image. The total cost for converting the entire five years of film records to digital format (approximately 2.7 million images on 1150 rolls of 16mm microfilm) is estimated at \$188.0. The remainder of the request would be used toward conversion of more than 30,000 plat aperture cards to digital format at an estimated \$.30 per image. Technology continues to progress, and the component needs to keep up with current trends in order to provide the best service to its many customers.

Project Benefits:

The ability for the public to access document images by computer will result in some time savings for recording staff. Staff frequently have to assist customers with locating the film records, instruct them in the proper use of the micrographics equipment, and refile misplaced film records. The time savings generated by digitizing the most heavily researched documents can then be utilized to supplement other statutory functions such as maintaining current grantor/grantee and location indices.

It is the Recorder's Office's intention to provide the public with easy-to-access information while keeping up with current technological trends. Towards that end, this project proposes the creation of digitized images from approximately five years of microfiche or roll film. The ability to access an image of a document while simultaneously researching the index records will be a major improvement of service to customers researching recording office records.

Projected Revenue to the State:

The conversion of this information to digital format will not immediately produce any new revenues to the state, but it will enable the public to find the information they need in a faster and more efficient manner. It also facilitates the transition into increased usage of technology for public research purposes in recording offices statewide. If the image use is also ultimately extended to enhance the web index information, consideration will be given to assessing a fee to access official copies via the internet. This could provide a new source of revenue to the state, but would largely be offset by the anticipated reduction of similar copy requests in the local recording offices as customers expand usage of the internet access.

Project Support

User support clearly exists in the implementation of digitized image availability, as voiced by a multitude of customers. Weekly inquiries are made of the Recorder's Office as to when these records will be available in a digital format. Technology continues to progress, and the component must keep up with the current trends in order to be of service to its many customers.

Project Opposition

The Recorder's Office is not aware of any public opposition to this conversion project.

Does this project leverage other funding for the state?

No

Alternative Approaches/Financing Considered

The component has considered the purchase of conversion equipment specifically for this type of process. The cost of the equipment needed for the conversion process is approximately \$70,000. However, even with the equipment, the component has no staffing resources that it could dedicate to such project, and would require additional personal services funding to accomplish this. The component considers an outsourcing arrangement through a professional service bureau to be the preferred approach for the conversion project.

Project History/Other Information

This is the first request the component has submitted for such projects. The public frequently requires searches and copies of records from the past five years. The wear and tear on both microfiche and roll film media can be detrimental and equipment maintenance costs for micrographics equipment continue to escalate. In addition, the time taken from a recorder's daily duties to assist, look-up, and make copies of these records can be substantial. By enhancing the statewide index with digitized records, customers can obtain the documents they require from the database directly within the Recorder's Office, or from the Internet in the comfort of their own office or home on a 24-hour basis. They would not have to travel to a specific recording district to obtain copies of records as they now frequently have to do.

The conversion of the microfiche or roll/film to digitized images could be completed in two separate ways. The Recorder's Office could either procure the equipment in which to convert the microfiche/roll film to images and hire a part-time person to complete the task, or could out-source the microfiche/roll film to a service bureau that would charge so much per image to digitize the records. There would be no direct economic development in the out-sourcing of the project, but the staff time that would be saved by the public's own access of these records should be substantial, and would free up staff time to complete other projects.